

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WARSAW 00215 132026Z

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TAGS: EFIS, PL

SUBJECT: FISHERIES: MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE'S REMARKS
ABOUT U.S. SEIZURE OF POLISH VESSELS

1. MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND MARITIME ECONOMY JERZY
OLSZEWSKI OPENED OUR MEETING OF JANUARY 12, WHICH I HAD
REQUESTED TO DISCUSS OTHER ISSUES (WARSAW 178), BY ASKING
FOR HELP IN THE MATTER OF U.S. CONDUCT TOWARD POLISH
FISHING VESSELS OFF THE EAST COAST OF THE UNITED STATES.
APOLOGIZING FOR DELAYING OUR DISCUSSION, WHICH HAD BEEN
POSTPONED FOR TWO HOURS AT THE LAST MOMENT, HE EXPLAINED
THAT PREMIER JAROSZEWICZ HAD CALLED HIM IN TO DISCUSS
VICE-MINISTERIAL CHARGES BEING MADE IN THE MINISTRY IN
RESPONSE TO THE SERIES OF DETENTIONS OF POLISH FISHING
VESSELS BY U.S. AUTHORITIES. POLAND HAD AN UNENVIABLY
HIGH RECORD OF FOUR VESSELS APPREHENDED BY THE U.S.
COAST GUARD DURING 1975, SAID OLSZEWSKI, DESPITE THE FACT
THAT HE HAD GIVEN STRICT INSTRUCTIONS THAT VESSELS SHOULD
NOT FISH LESS THAN 13 MILES FROM THE U.S. COAST. THE
DECISION TO KEEP POLISH FISHERMEN AN EXTRA MILE OFFSHORE
HAD BEEN COSTLY IN TERMS OF THE FLEET'S CATCH, HE SAID,
BUT POLAND CONSIDERED MAINTENANCE OF EXCELLENT RELATIONS
WITH THE UNITED STATES IN THE FIELD OF FISHERIES, AS IN
ALL OTHER AREAS, TO BE OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE.

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PAGE 02 WARSAW 00215 132026Z

2. OLSZEWSKI CITED THE TRANSFER OF FISHERIES RESPONSIBI-

BILITIES TO VICE MINISTER EDWIN WISNIEWSKI, WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS CALM BUT STRONG, AND HIS OWN MEETINGS WITH FLEET CAPTAINS IN POLISH PORT CITIES, AS EVIDENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN WITH THE FISHERIES PROBLEM. ACCORDING TO THE MINISTER, CAPTAINS WHOSE VESSELS WERE SEIZED HAVE BEEN DEALT WITH SEVERELY. DEMOTION BY THREE GRADES AND TRANSFER TO ANOTHER VESSEL WAS MENTIONED AS A TYPICAL PUNISHMENT.

3. THE MINISTER DID, HOWEVER, WISH TO BRING TO MY ATTENTION THE CLAIMS OF HIS CAPTAINS THAT THE U.S. COAST GUARD GIVES SPECIAL ATTENTION TO POLISH VESSELS. IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH THEM, HE SAID, HIS FISHING CAPTAINS CLAIM THAT JAPANESE VESSELS WHICH VIOLATE THE U.S. 12-MILE LIMIT ARE TREATED LENIENTLY BECAUSE THE U.S. IS ALLIED WITH JAPAN AND THAT SIMILAR LENIENT TREATMENT IS GIVEN TO SOVIET VESSELS, BECAUSE THE U.S. IS INTERESTED IN CULTIVATING GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U.S.S.R. IN MOST RECENT INCIDENT, HE SAID, THE POLISH SHIP HAD RECEIVED NO WARNING THAT IT MIGHT BE APPROACHING THE 12-MILE LIMIT. WORSE, THE TREATMENT OF THE POLISH CREW SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN UNUSUALLY HOSTILE, WITH COASTGUARDSMEN DRAWING REVOLVERS AND HANDCUFFING THE CAPTAIN. OLSZEWSKI COMMENTED THAT HE GENERALLY FOUND TRUTH TO BE ALONG THE MIDDLE PATH, BUT HE WANTED TO BRING THIS MATTER TO MY ATTENTION AND TO ASK MY ASSISTANCE IN INSURING THAT POLISH FISHING VESSELS WERE TREATED IN THE SAME WAY AS OTHER FOREIGN VESSELS FISHING THESE WATERS.

4. I ASSURED THE MINISTER THAT WHILE I HAD NO DOUBT OF THE COAST GUARD'S VIGILANCE, I WAS EQUALLY CERTAIN OF ITS IMPARTIALITY. I SAID THAT I WOULD MAKE HIS CONCERNS KNOWN AND WOULD REQUEST WHATEVER ADDITIONAL INFORMATION MIGHT BE AVAILABLE IN THE DEPARTMENT CONCERNING THESE INCIDENTS.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: I WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION THE DEPARTMENT CAN SUPPLY THAT WOULD REINFORCE MY ASSURANCES TO THE MINISTER. DETAILS OF THE APPREHENSION OF THE F/V LEPUS WOULD BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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PAGE 03 WARSAW 00215 132026Z

USEFUL. A SUMMARY COMPARING THE NUMBER OF SEIZURES OF POLISH VESSELS WITH SEIZURES OF OTHER FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL, AS WOULD INFORMATION WHICH INDICATES THAT INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN CAPTAINS, FOR EXAMPLE THE SOVIET ORDER TO REMAIN 15 MILES FROM THE COAST (STATE 303790, DECEMBER 29, 1975), MAY BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A LOWER RATE OF VIOLATIONS BY THE VESSELS OF OTHER NATIONS. I UNDERSTAND THAT WARNINGS ARE CUSTOMARILY GIVEN VESSELS WHOSE PRESENCE WITHIN THE 12-MILE LIMIT CAN BE DETERMINED ONLY BY A SINGLE POSITION FIX. PLEASE

FORWARD A LIST OF THE WARNINGS ISSUED POLISH VESSELS
DURING THE PAST YEAR OFF BOTH COASTS OF THE U.S.
DAVIES

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